

For the Greater Good

A Framework for Advancing State Arts Education
Partnerships



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF STATE ARTS AGENCIES

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A FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCING STATE ARTS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

Leadership Initiative Partners:

National Endowment for the Arts

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Arts/Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network

Arts Education Partnership

Council of Chief State School Officers

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FOR THE GREATER GOOD:

A Framework for Advancing State Arts Education Partnerships

Dawn M. Ellis and Craig Dreeszen
Edited by: Marete Wester

Letter from the CEO

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation funded the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative between June 2001 and September 2002 with a grant to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). The major premise guiding the design of the initiative was that the availability and quality of arts education at the local level are greatly influenced by policy decisions and resource allocation decisions made at the state level. Therefore, the strategies upon which the initiative focused were:

- to explore what state-level arts education support networks could accomplish;
- to foster the professional development and leadership skills of state arts agency arts education managers; and
- to enhance communication and the sharing of information about arts education.

NASAA, the Arts Education Partnership, the National Endowment for the Arts and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts worked on these strategies as partners. One lasting benefit of this initiative is the increase in mutual understanding that continues to inform the work of this national team.

For the Greater Good: Frameworks for Advancing State Arts Education Partnerships specifically documents what was learned from one particular leadership network initiative activity: a workshop that brought together leaders representing the state-level arts education support networks from Florida, Hawaii, Mississippi, Ohio and South Carolina. Our intention was to share, analyze and summarize the five networks' collective experience in such a way that other states interested in advancing their own arts education relationships could consult this report and realize valuable savings in expense, time and human resources. Readers will judge whether *For the Greater Good* succeeds in these aims.

Additional products of the initiative include the Arts and Learning Web site, which readers may click onto at <http://www.nasaa-arts.org>, and the completion of the *Arts Education Manager Self-Assessment Tool*. Conceived and created by a committee of dedicated state arts agency arts education managers, the self-assessment tool enables managers of arts education activities to assess their leadership skills and to chart the course of their professional development in such domains as administration, advocacy, communication, fundraising, evaluation and assessment, educational psychology, intercultural understanding, partnership building, policy formulation and knowledge of educational systems. It can serve as a model for use by other professional networks. For information, contact NASAA's Director of Leadership Development Johanna Misey Boyer.

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Introduction

The Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative: A Strategic Investment in Education Reform

Arts Education: A Growing Demand

In the past 20 years, arts education has occupied an increasingly prominent place in public policy discussions of the arts. Research continues to demonstrate the impact of the arts in the social and intellectual development of young children, and an increasing number of states are embracing the arts in their plans for education reform. During the 1990s, localities across the nation took advantage of incentives from the U.S. Department of Education to secure more than \$10 million in new federal funds to incorporate the arts as a sequential component of a complete education.

However, the complexity of educational decision-making at all levels—whether national, state or local—requires purposeful and well-organized participation on the part of parents, community leaders and educators to have any significant effect.

Arts advocate Jane Remer describes the magnitude of any task requiring educational reform in the United States:

The sheer size of the reform task is daunting: over 15,000 school districts, more than 85,000 public schools, 45 million and counting students, and 2.5 million teachers comprise the business of schooling in our country. For lasting change to occur, a huge need for professional development and leadership training must be fulfilled. On this scale, reform must be planned comprehensively and systematically but must proceed one school at a time, with district, state and federal support (*Beyond Enrichment*, 63).

There is strong evidence that despite the many social and economic challenges that are marking the start of the 21st century, the trend toward valuing the arts as a vital area of learning will continue to grow. Though this provides important opportunities for advocates of the arts and education, the challenge continues to be in developing the organizational capacity and support infrastructures needed to adequately address the increasing demand for quality, sequential arts education in our schools.

Strategic support for leadership and advocacy infrastructure has long been recognized as critical to long-term arts education progress. In 1988, a group of 29 arts and education groups that met at a national conference at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan agreed on the following:

Basic research, model projects, and advocacy efforts are critical to establishing a consistent and compelling case for increasing the economic base of support for arts education in schools and in the community at large. While the primary responsibility for increasing budget allocations in support of education programs rests with local school boards and administrators, we all must recognize our share in this responsibility as members of the larger society. We must build a powerful community constituency at local, state and national levels among arts and arts education organizations to initiate a step-by-step process for change (*Toward a New Era in Arts Education*, 10).

Since then, arts leaders and education advocates at all levels have been working toward forging a common—or at least a complementary—agenda for addressing, nurturing and sustaining arts education as a visible and viable component of our schools and communities. Over the years this work has created a national infrastructure for arts education, representing an influential network of national, state and local leaders in the arts, education, business and government.

Partnership: A Guiding Force in Education Reform

The sweeping education reform agenda of the federal Goals 2000 Educate America Act signed into law in March 1994, ushered in a renewed national impetus toward engaging in partnership as a viable means to achieve a difficult end. This emphasis was not limited to—or, in fact, even begun with—the arts; partnerships linking after-school or pre-school activities, efforts to increase parental involvement and community engagement in schools or to develop effective school-work connections became the standard during the 1990s. Spearheading this effort, the U.S. Department of Education actively encouraged the leveraging of national, state and local partnerships in support of the federal education agenda.

Partnerships in Arts Education: The National Arena

This momentum created by Goals 2000 helped to increase the level of cooperation among various public and private sectors in support of improving arts education, exemplified through the establishment of the Arts Education Partnership (formerly the Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership).

ARTS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) represents a unique national forum and private coalition of more than 140 education, arts, business, philanthropic, civic and government organizations, working together to demonstrate and promote the essential role of arts education in enabling all students to succeed in school, life and work. The partnership receives basic support through a cooperative agreement with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the U.S. Department of Education, and is co-managed by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

In 1999, the U.S. Department of Education and the NEA commissioned the AEP to develop a guide to building and sustaining successful partnerships. The publication and accompanying Web site, *Learning Partnerships: Improving Learning in Schools with Arts Partners in the Community*, offered guidance to community leaders on strategies for combining their expertise and resources in support of arts education programs for young people.

The guide's authors, Craig Dreeszen, Arnold Aprill and Richard Deasy, identified state-level partnerships as especially valuable mechanisms for advancing arts education for every student within a state. Through a combination of pooled resources and expertise, the collaborations at the state level that were profiled in the guide demonstrated the kinds of activities best achieved through joint action.

These included:

- convening leadership forums, events and activities;
- expanding statewide resources and funding streams;
- providing technical assistance and information; as well as
- forging a common agenda for arts education and a statewide plan of action.

Partnerships in Arts Education: The State Arena

The major entities behind many statewide partnerships for arts education include an influential triad of public and private entities: the state arts agencies, the state departments of education and the state alliances for arts education, which are the statewide, nonprofit organizations that represent practitioners and citizen advocates for arts education. By combining their various resources and individual strengths, these entities have demonstrated that substantial results can be achieved at the state level through collaborations in arts education programming, policy and/or advocacy. When functioning effectively together, each agency is able to bring its own particular expertise, networks and resources in support of a common agenda for advancing arts education statewide.

STATE ARTS AGENCIES

Every state and jurisdictional arts agency employs or contracts with one or more full- or part-time arts education managers. Not only do they work with other government, state-level and local arts education advocates, they have direct management responsibility for \$94.1 million annually in program funds that enable schools, districts and community groups to work together

to improve learning in the arts. In 2001, these funds leveraged a total expenditure at the local level of \$2.06 billion that supported more than 9,700 projects in 3,139 communities. In addition, state arts agencies provide more direct funding to the statewide alliances for arts education that are members of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN) to carry out their programs, services and advocacy than any single funding source other than the Kennedy Center.

STATE ALLIANCES FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN) was formed in 1973 as part of a Congressional mandate to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as the national performing arts center. The KCAAEN is a coalition of 46 statewide, nonprofit organizations working in partnership with the Kennedy Center to support policies, practices and partnerships designed to ensure that the arts are a critical and essential part of American K-12 education. State alliances for arts education bring together educators, community leaders, arts organizations, parents and concerned citizens to plan and implement programs and activities that address state and local issues and concerns related to arts education. Collectively the alliances serve almost 2.5 million people each year. Their programs and services include monitoring state and local policy, providing professional development opportunities for educators and others, and recognizing outstanding arts education programs and arts education leaders at the state and local levels. Alliances partner with state arts agencies and state departments of education to develop and implement statewide initiatives designed to address opportunities for furthering arts education and to provide a supportive environment for arts education through the development and implementation of standards, assessments and graduation requirements in the arts, as well as the use of arts education research.

STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION

The third group of arts education professionals is the state department of education fine arts consultants, who represent departments in 46 states. Some of these agency staff cover one or more fine arts disciplines, and some have additional curricular responsibilities in areas such as the humanities. As the National Council of State Arts Education Consultants (NCSAEC), they function as a network. NCSAEC meets during the year under the auspices of CCSSO. Within the SCASS (State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards) group, state fine arts consultants are well represented in the Arts Education Assessment Consortium.

A National Initiative Takes Form

NASAA has played an active leadership role in the efforts to integrate the arts in federal education policy. In addition to supporting the work of individual state arts agencies, NASAA has partnered with national entities including the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the J. Paul Getty Trust to expand the arts education services, information and resources that are available to the field at large. NASAA's involvement and influence in federal education reform most notably coalesce in its co-direction of the AEP with the CCSSO.

With the support of private foundations, these partnerships have resulted in successful leadership initiatives such as the Goals 2000 Arts Education Leadership Fund. Operated by NASAA, this fund directed more than \$1 million private sector dollars to strengthen state-level arts education advocacy. More than \$10 million in Goals 2000 funds has now been awarded for arts education activities. NASAA has also engaged in the broad-based dissemination of research findings and publications designed to inform and strengthen the arts education field. One example of this is its distribution of *Eloquent Evidence: Arts at the Core of Learning*, a brochure that presents research findings on the benefits of including the arts in the basic K-12 curriculum.

Based on these partnership experiences and its previous track record of success with state-level investments in arts education, NASAA approached the David and Lucile Packard Foundation in March 2000 with the idea of creating the **Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative**. The Arts Education Leadership Network is an umbrella term intended to indicate two complementary networks at the state level that have great potential for improving the availability and quality of arts education provided at the local level by schools, arts organizations and other community groups.

NASAA's Leadership Role

The intent of the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative was to help strengthen the national support system for these networks, in order to improve the quality and availability of arts education at the state and local levels. NASAA was recognized as a focus for this intervention because of its dual role of serving as the network for state arts agency arts education managers and its co-direction of the AEP.

Specifically, NASAA's role in directing the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative was to:

- encourage the leadership and professional development of the state arts agency arts education (SAA AE) program managers, who are primarily responsible for advancing arts education policy in the state arts agency and in supporting arts education in local communities statewide;
- investigate and support state-level partnerships, primarily among SAA AE managers, state alliances for arts education (AAE) and fine arts consultants at the departments of education (SDE); and
- enhance communication and information sharing among arts education leaders by enabling the state arts education partnership teams (SAAs, SDEs and AAEs), as well as SAA arts education managers, to operate as active, year-round, networked "learning communities."

The National Partners

Beginning in 2000, NASAA guided the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative, particularly the investigation of state-level partnerships, in cooperation with the AEP, the NEA and the KCAEEN. This decision was made with the intention of modeling at the national level, the infrastructure needed to make and sustain progress in the availability and quality of arts education at the state and local levels.

The national partners in the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative include:

- **The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)**, which is the Congressionally-funded federal agency whose mission revolves around supporting, nurturing and providing access to arts and culture. The NEA has historically and consistently played a catalytic role in national arts education initiatives, as well as in its support of state arts agencies' arts education programs.
- **The National Assembly for State Arts Agencies (NASAA)** is the leading public sector policymaking association in the arts. NASAA unites, represents and serves the nation's state and jurisdictional arts agencies. Each of the 56 states and jurisdictions has created an agency to support excellence in and access to the arts. For over 10 years and with support through the NEA, the arts education managers from the state arts agencies have been communicating and meeting regularly as a professional development network through NASAA. The arts education managers have met once a year at the NASAA annual meeting for several days of professional development supported by the NEA and organized by a leadership group working directly with NEA and NASAA staff.
- The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts supports arts education throughout the United States through a wide variety of programs and services including the **Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN)**. The Kennedy Center provides grant support to the state alliances for arts education, convenes an annual leadership meeting, provides technical assistance and information for state alliances, and honors excellence in school arts education programs through the KCAAEN national awards program. The KCAAEN has also developed special initiatives for the alliances and the arts education field including the *Creative Ticket for Student Success* campaign, *Arts Beyond the School Day: Extending the Power* (a protocol for high-quality after-school programs developed with the Kennedy Center Partners in Education program) and *A Community Audit for Arts Education*. (The national partners for the *Community Audit* are the AEP, the NEA, NASAA, Americans for the Arts and the National Dance Education Organization.) The Kennedy Center Education Department is partially funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the Kennedy Center Corporate Fund.

Leaders at the state level have consistently been supported in their education reform efforts by these national organizations who, by working together, as well as individually, have provided forums for professional development, advocacy for the strengthening of federal policy and information and technical assistance in arts education. On a less uniform basis, the NCSAEC, comprised of the fine arts consultants employed by state departments of education, has met from time to time, but has not had the benefit of a stable source of funding and coordination to assist in building their network.

Historic Collaborations

Prior to embarking on the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative, these national partners shared a history of productive collaborations in arts education and in working toward strengthening state-level partnerships. The groundwork for the initiative was laid in 2000, when

the AEP, in cooperation with the KCAAEN, NASAA, the U.S. Department of Education and the NEA, convened the state department of education fine arts consultants on April 12 and 13.

Funded by the NEA and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the purpose of this meeting was twofold:

- To obtain guidance from the fine arts consultants on how the national partners could help states develop productive working relationships with their state arts agency and alliance for arts education colleagues.
- To consider strategies for advancing state arts education partnerships that support teaching and learning in the arts.

The results of the meeting were compiled in the publication, *Strengthening State-Level Arts Education Partnerships*, (AEP, October, 2000), which offered observations and insights into the essential need for effective state partnerships: why some work and some don't and, most importantly, what the next steps are toward an action agenda for improving arts education at the state and national levels.

The relationship among the national partners, coupled with the tools and resources produced from prior investigations into partnerships that support arts education, provided the foundation for these partners to undertake the next step: investigating the factors and elements that contribute to the success of arts education partnerships at the state level.

Chapter

1

Lessons from the Field

State-level Decision-Making Defined

At the state level, crucial decisions are made that affect the availability of arts education in local communities everywhere. These decisions include:

- adoption of minimum standards for local instruction in the arts;
- adoption and funding of assessment for learning in the arts at the local level;
- certification requirements for teachers of the arts;
- certification requirements in the arts for all teachers, including generalists responsible for arts learning and specialists in other subjects who may integrate the arts in their instruction;
- entrance requirements in the arts for state universities; and
- adoption of high school graduation requirements in the arts.

Many states have created coalitions to address these levels of decision-making, as well as to promote the value of arts education and strengthen existing opportunities for youth to learn in and through the arts. From advocacy to professional development opportunities for educators, these state-level partnerships work in tandem with the local level on behalf of arts education. Despite evidence of tangible outcomes of success (e.g., a state adopts a mandatory arts requirement for high school graduation or the legislature approves a line item for arts education funding), what makes these partnerships effective at their core is often difficult to discern.

Opportunity for National Intervention

In this complex and high stakes environment for educational decisionmaking, local advocates are unlikely to implement sustainable gains nor accumulate and share knowledge without leadership that is institutionalized and centrally supported.

A National Initiative: A Working Process

With scores of variables at play in both national and state agencies and in public and private organizations, the most ambitious goal of the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative clearly was to investigate, support and advance state-level arts education partnerships nationally.

To address the goal of advancing state partnership through national action, NASAA, the AEP, the NEA and the KCAAEN developed a working process that models at the national level, the kind of interagency collaboration that characterizes successful state partnerships. Through this investigation, the partners also hoped to identify those factors and elements that contribute to the success of a state partnership and, by doing so, provide important lessons from—and for—the field.

The collaboration of these partners at the national level has resulted in new insights into the inner workings of strong state partnerships and a greater understanding of the needs and challenges in an already complex field. It has also resulted in the development of new partnership resources, including this publication.

The First Step: Gathering Key Leaders

In 2001, the national partners decided to convene two meetings where representatives of the three key state constituencies—state arts agencies, state departments of education and state alliances for arts education—would gather to work together and learn from each other. The intent of these meetings was to investigate the advantages and challenges of creating and sustaining effective state-level partnerships and to report the outcomes and results of this work.

The first event took place on June 23, 2001, at the quarterly meeting of the Arts Education Partnership, held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, in partnership with the KCAAEN. Twenty-seven fine arts consultants from state departments of education, 95 representatives from state alliances for arts education and 15 arts education managers from state and jurisdictional arts councils attended a networking event to begin the process of developing leadership opportunities to advance state-level partnerships. Travel expenses for these state leaders were supported by funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and various state governments.

The state leaders participated in breakout sessions and facilitated discussions on key topics on state-level partnerships. Presentations by U.S. Department of Education personnel profiled new opportunities and upcoming changes in the federal education legislation.

The Second Step: Identifying Best Practice

“The NEA has had a vision since 1986 to be concerned about the arts as basic education. We attack the problem of inadequate education in the arts through partnerships....” Doug Herbert, NEA, November 3, 2001.

Following the successful June meeting, the national partners embarked on the next step of the initiative: to investigate factors that enable sustained and productive arts education partnerships among state arts councils, state departments of education and state alliances for arts education.

To facilitate this effort, NASAA, the NEA, the KCAAEN and the AEP decided together to examine specific statewide partnerships recognized for their success in advancing their state’s agenda for arts education. Pooling their knowledge, the partners identified five states with notably strong relationships in 2001 among the state arts councils, state departments of education and state alliances for arts education. As a result, Ohio, Mississippi, Florida, South Carolina and Hawaii were invited and agreed to participate in an investigation designed to offer their colleagues useful insights into the work of building and sustaining effective state arts education partnerships.

The envoys that were invited from each state represented personnel with specific involvement in their arts education partnership, as well as with policymakers and broader policy issues. Working with researchers and consultants, these state leaders were asked to contribute to an emerging framework for successful arts partnerships.

The Third Step: Preparing for the Main Event

“This is a landmark meeting. The national partners will talk about and reflect on this for a long time.” Sara Goldhawk, AEP, November 3, 2001.

In preparation for the national gathering on November 3, 2001, the state leaders were asked to reflect on their partnerships and articulate the following:

- The top three supportive factors enabling their partnership.
- The top three challenging factors they encountered in their partnership.
- Up to 10 tangible outcomes resulting from their work together.
- Profiles of their partnership, as well as each organization’s individual programs and efforts in arts education.

This preparatory work was then circulated to and read by the participants prior to the November meeting. Rather than simply convene the group of state leaders, the national partners hoped to prime the attendees for higher level and more in-depth discussions on the nature of statewide partnership.

While this was no simple task, the participants gladly obliged. Many indicated that the actual act of examining the partnership in this light provided them with professional development and the opportunity to reflect on their joint work. With a finite amount of time within which to accomplish an ambitious objective, the preliminary work proved invaluable in preparing the participants for the daylong discussion. In addition, more voices were able to enter into the reflective discussion on partnership, beyond those able to attend the meeting.

The Fourth Step: Creating a Day of Learning

“Out of today’s sharing, we hope to identify underlying characteristics that have nurtured and sustained your partnerships. We’re looking for principles...so we can learn from one another. It is good to see how partnerships have grown in scope and sophistication. We work together as national partners to nurture and establish working relationships. What is more important now is how to sustain them....” Derek E. Gordon, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, November 3, 2001.

Despite the tragic world events of September 2001, all invited states sent representatives to the November partnership gathering in Washington, DC. The participants came with a heightened sense of awareness of the importance of their work, reinforcing their commitment to the need for arts education in this country. Convened on a Saturday, they delved into a packed agenda and began building a framework for state arts education partnership. Exploring real partnership challenges and telling true stories, the participants identified the factors discussed in chapter two and provided the critical information that led to the development of an environmental framework. The insights they shared with the national partners and consultants are detailed in chapters two and three.

The Emerging Framework

Like many other activities, partnerships are generally easier to sustain when resources are plentiful. However, effective partnerships are able to capitalize on each other's resources and support each other during difficult times. State advocates for arts education respond variably during periods of shrinking resources. Organizations under strain may pull back on their commitment to partnership, concentrating instead on areas critical to their individual mission. In the wake of shifting priorities, partnerships may be scaled back in an effort to protect "turf."

Those who look to their allies for support have a larger, more diversified workforce to call upon during strenuous times. Successful partnerships operate strategically and with great synergy: when one partner experiences a setback, another may step in to assist. This is possible if a common vision and understanding of what can occur through partnership work has been forged.

The work of partnership inevitably takes more time than just going it alone. However, organizations that have made partnership an integral way of providing services may find that they are able to accomplish more. This is especially true if the work is distributed evenly among partners, the roles are clear and the priorities are shared. A vision like *arts for all kids in the state* or a goal, such as *establish a state graduation requirement in the arts*, becomes more achievable with a team behind it.

Factors Affecting State Arts Education Partnerships

Originally, the national investigation of state arts education partnerships focused on identifying inherent strengths and challenges. However, when the preliminary work provided by the states was examined, it was evident that what one state considered to be a strength or asset may manifest as a challenge in another. In fact, more often than not, the factors affecting state arts education partnerships are fluid and continually evolve, depending on timing and circumstances. Under the right conditions, what was once considered a partnership "asset" can easily become a challenge.

Factors Explained

During the assessment phase, the concept of “factor” began to emerge as an *important area of influence* in the partnership. In this work, the term “factor” is used loosely to describe an important aspect arising from the data.

These factors exist on a continuum between “asset” and “challenge.” A factor that functions as an “asset” is something the state partners identified as contributing to their ability to work together effectively and accomplish their objectives. Conversely, a factor that functions as a “challenge” works against the effectiveness—and in extreme cases, the very existence—of the partnership. State arts education partnerships may experience a factor as both an asset as well as a challenge simultaneously, given the specific environmental conditions that exist in a particular state.

To make state arts education partnerships work, the state leaders agreed that the strategy should be to cultivate the assets and minimize the challenges inherent in these factors. Every state and every partnership experiences obstacles in working together. None of the states participating in this investigation found their partnership work to be easy. But by recognizing, addressing and working through their challenges, the state partners developed protocols and habits that helped them to integrate the work of partnership into their organizational culture and achieve mutual goals.

Factor Framework

“Our intended outcome is to identify the factors and the contexts and working decisions that facilitate accomplishment by state-level teams. You’re here because you are successful and you have much to teach. We know it’s a bumpy road. There is just as much interest in what didn’t work, what was tried and failed and what was learned from that. The question is how to pool our experience, so that the summary of it is valuable to the field, so that the lessons learned come through, so the things that one might expect or not are made clearer for people, ultimately so that people who choose to accomplish similar things will know what the course may hold for them and make better decisions. We’re here to empower our colleagues.” Jonathan Katz, CEO, NASAA, November 3, 2001.

Based on the preliminary information state leaders shared with the investigators prior to the November 2001 meeting, a “factor grid” was developed to summarize the common elements of partnership each state experienced. Though other unique factors may influence and be present in some state partnerships, the grid that was developed represents common factors that were consistent in each of the state arts education partnerships examined.

The following factors provide one way of looking at the work of state arts education partnerships. Because any state in any given point in time may experience a factor as an asset or encounter it as a challenge, the factors are presented as part of a continuum. These factors do not remain static. They are, however, what consume the time and energy needed to sustain the work of partnerships.

Factors in State Arts Education Partnerships—Assets and Challenges

Asset	to	Challenge
As Asset	FACTOR	As Challenge
<i>You might enjoy:</i>		<i>You might encounter:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared vision • Complementary missions • Articulation through goals and plans • Common expectations leading to framework for making decisions 	VISION <i>For arts education</i> <i>For working together</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing visions or missions • Conflict in organizational values and cultures • Difficulty with managing change • Different priorities put stress on time allotment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly delineated responsibilities • Knowing whom to call when for what purpose • Complementary relationships • Flexibility for roles to evolve • Capacity to negotiate role conflicts 	ROLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear authority lines and boundaries • Bureaucracies get in the way • Reluctance to call upon others for assistance • Conflicting multiple roles (funding agency/funded organization vs. partner, internal board member vs. external partner)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External grants that focus interventions and leverage new resources • Development of new personnel positions, both state and local • Strategic use of existing resources • Allocation of agency resources for partnership goals 	RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements dictated by existing resources create conflict • Key personnel stretched • Lean budgets • Perceived competition for the same dollar • Lack of public support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated personal commitment contributes to vision • Shared goals can rise above personal or single organization gain • Trust • Adaptability 	LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key personnel turnover affects consistency • Change in policymakers can shift mission and goals • Organizational problems, affecting time, scheduling and planning • Lack of a catalyst
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular communication protocol • Organizations incorporate elements of shared plan into organizational functions • Informal and formal communication systems in place • Face-to-face, consensus-building time • Advisory arts education committees 	COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divergence • Lack of communication leading to mistrust • Confusion • Hasty actions lead to setbacks • Reluctance to call upon partner • Unrelated or inefficient activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who gets credit is clear • Locus for action and tangible results • Focus remains on impact of work • Opportunity to educate and incorporate new personnel during staff turnover 	PRODUCT <i>Tangible Collaborative Endeavor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicting claims for credit • Unappreciated dominant partner • Partners weary of philosophical discussions without action • Lack of direction or sense of completion

Factors at Work

At the start of the November 2001 meeting, participants were led through a discussion of the factors grid to help them develop a shared language for further exploring each factor. The following information provides an explanation of each factor and summarizes the state partners' advice on what challenges to watch out for and recommendations for turning challenges into assets¹. States that have successful partnerships learn from challenges and take conflicting views into consideration.

VISION

"The vision provides a united public voice. The partners speak as one to the public. In South Carolina, this is one of the strongest partnership assets."

Vision is the ability to see ahead and chart a course to a valued end goal. A vision is shared, and represents a common concept of what partners are trying to accomplish together.

All participants agreed that an articulate, shared vision was critical to the success of the state partners. The states developed three sets of recommendations related to the vision factor: the **envisioning process**, the **content of the vision** and **working with the vision**.

- **Envisioning process:** Agreeing on a common vision is essential, but partners need to establish familiarity, trust and some operational norms before they can envision effectively. Face-to-face planning time is helpful at this stage of the process. The vision should be collaboratively developed and owned, ideally resulting from consensus. Disagreements may be inevitable during this process, but can be an opportunity for learning among the partners. The vision should describe common ground among the partners; it will be larger than any single agency and encompass broad, mutually desirable goals. While individual partner goals derived from and connected to their agency needs may at times diverge from each other, they are still linked to the overall partnership vision.
- **Content of the vision:** Participants used different words to describe the written statement that describes why the partnership exists: vision, mission and overarching goals. Whatever its label, the statement should be written, and highly visible in partnership materials distributed to internal and external audiences. The vision should be concise, clear and simple. It should be broad, yet focused so partners can refer to it to reaffirm their direction. The most compelling visions are passionate about the value of arts education. Many meeting participants valued visions that put students first. Others stressed the importance of an inclusive vision that would benefit people of all ages, talents and levels of ability through lifelong learning. But the state-level team must share a common vision for furthering arts education in their state.

¹ The following summary of factors is based on a framework developed by Dawn M. Ellis prior to the Nov. 3, 2001 meeting, tested and enhanced at the meeting by the five states attending the meeting, with the subsequent advice summarized by evaluator Craig Dreeszen (Dreeszen and Ellis) p. 7-18.

- **Working with the vision:** Once consensus is reached on the shared vision, the state partners should unite behind a clear public message that is consistent with that vision. The vision provides the focus and common ground that sustains partnerships through difficult times. The vision should also be a long-term guide to planning, program development and action. Funders, new partners and constituents should be introduced to the vision and encouraged to help shape it. Partners should regularly revisit the vision, but state leaders at the November 2001 meeting recommended not overhauling it too frequently. They recommended developing a process and timeline for a formal revision procedure.

Vision as a roadmap: Once the vision is in place, the partners recommend creating a road map—a strategic plan with measurable goals and objectives. These markers will provide incremental steps to take and ways to assess how the partnership is doing in achieving its overall vision. Evaluation and assessment play an important role in tracking the success of partnerships in accomplishing goals and objectives.

The states cautioned that there are advantages and disadvantages to having either a highly focused or very broad vision. The narrow-scope vision has the advantage of focusing partnership activities to prevent moving off target. But the broad vision allows partners flexibility in taking advantage of unforeseen opportunities. The lesson is to be intentional about your planning to unite the partners and supporters around the vision, the steps to it and the role to be played.

Advice from the States on “Vision”

- Put students first.
- Expect the partnership vision to be a negotiation.
- Know that vision is collaboratively developed and subsequently owned by all partners.
- Consider vision an “ideal” to guide your journey.

ROLES

“Roles are often shared. Don’t duplicate; help each other find the gaps....”

Roles serve as the natural connection between the organizational, personal and professional strengths of a particular partner and the work needed to achieve the vision. Roles link organizations together like interlocking puzzle pieces.

State leaders advised on the process of identifying and clarifying partner roles rather than comment on what role an agency should play within a state partnership. Depending on their circumstances, states will inevitably define specific roles within partnerships differently. But obtaining clarity about roles early in the partnership process can help partners determine what additional partners may be needed to achieve particular objectives.

- **Identifying partners.** As a partnership evolves, it may be useful to identify which roles are to be fulfilled by whom and to identify what needed roles are unfulfilled. This provides guidance for finding and recruiting additional partners. Some partners may serve an interim function until the ideal complement of partners is reached. Moreover, different partners may be needed for particular tasks. Participants suggested expanding partnerships to include input from additional sectors such as higher education, teacher professional associations, parent groups and artists.
- **Defining partner roles.** Individual members of the partnership will fulfill different and complementary roles, and roles may change as the partnership evolves. Partners may play multiple roles within the partnership and within the state's arts education system as they serve on boards and committees. Sometimes roles rotate among the partners. It is important to value each role for the differing perspectives, skills, resources and constituencies represented. Individuals within the partnership should cultivate trust and respect, and take the time to recognize the others. By approaching the partnership as an ongoing, educational experience, partners can learn from the work of their partnership. As part of the partnership-building process, many state partners hold retreats and provide opportunities for participants to reflect and focus. In addition, targeted professional development may be useful. The partners can help each other build capacity to further arts education. As the partners grow and their roles inevitably change, it becomes important to document the origins of the partnership, the roles each partner has played and the key decisions that form the history of the partnership. It is useful to periodically assess roles as the environment changes, especially in the areas of politics and capacity.
- **Managing conflict.** Conflicts can arise around partnership authority and boundaries, especially when power and resources are unequal or partners have grantor/grantee relationships with each other. Partners should recognize each other's strengths and limits. Partner roles may be defined or constrained by law, policy or bureaucracy. In Hawaii, the state partnership positioned itself so that the arts education partners and their roles are mandated by state law, which reinforces their joint work.

Advice from the States on "Roles"

- Roles are often shared. Don't duplicate; help each other find the gaps.
- Recognize limitations of partners (legal, policy, funding, etc.)
- Keep partners informed using multiple forms of communication (e-mail, telephone, mail, etc.).
- Value, honor and celebrate your partnership.

RESOURCES

“We have to influence officials at the state level for how [federal] funding is distributed within each state. We have to infiltrate the state process, so we can influence how these funds are used.”

Resources include funding that is specific to arts education (which impacts programs) and more general funding (which impacts organizational capacity). Resources also include staff and volunteer personnel. In addition, space, constituents and access to assistance, research and knowledge bases, also provide a different sort of resource. The partnerships themselves are viewed as a resource that must be cared for and cultivated. In all cases, resources provide the power to get the work done.

The lack of adequate resources, especially funding, was universally cited as the most challenging factor facing state arts education partnerships. However, people’s skills and the time spent cultivating partnerships are important resources as well. Partners need sufficient time to apply their knowledge to the joint work, and, if stretched too far, their partnership work becomes a burden rather than a help. In many cases, the state partners reported the sense that the “plate that was full and overflowing.” Partnerships, especially successful ones, are also vulnerable to being stretched too thin or being asked to take on more and more responsibilities. State leaders recommend that partner organizations develop criteria individually and jointly for when and how to say “no.”

- **Funding resources:** Resources within each state are closely related to partnership composition and roles. Partners bring resources with them, especially when there is a close relationship between partnership goals and partner agency priorities. In some states, partners are designated as liaison to specific constituents (i.e., school boards or superintendents). Line item funding for arts education has worked in some states, but can present a danger in other state environments. Partnerships do provide the opportunity to identify and possibly leverage different funding streams, both private and public, that may not otherwise be available to a single agency to access.

The state partners expressed an interest in gaining access to information about federal and foundation funding, as these sources have been very important to partnership work. They also wanted to know more about the pathway of new funds designated for the state departments of education and how to better tap these in service of arts education partnership priorities.² In addition, state leaders recommended that their colleagues become more involved in dialogues with national and private funders about the needs of the field. Forums such as the AEP, Grantmakers in the Arts and Grantmakers in Education offer opportunities.

- **Human resources:** For cash-strapped partnerships, the participants’ intellectual capital becomes a critical resource. State partners stressed the importance of professional

² NASAA’s Arts & Learning Resources for State Leaders Web site provides a page of links to such resources. See http://nasaa-arts.org/nasaanews/index_anl.htm.

development, as it is the people who drive the projects. Having a portion of staff time within partner agencies dedicated to partnership work helps with the risk of overextending personnel.

Advice from the States on “Resources”

- Integrate partnership work in the strategic plans and budgets of partner agencies.
- Use the partnership to present a united front to the legislature, school board and other policymakers.
- Use outside funds (federal or other from outside the state) to leverage state monies that would not otherwise be committed to arts education.
- Make collaborative professional development for partners a priority, and plan for it.
- Honor capacity, special skills and strengths of partners; use people’s gifts.

LEADERSHIP

“Leadership entails being good listeners, forging consensus and sharing in vision-making.”

Leadership emerges in people with either the formal or informal authority needed to ensure that the vision and the work of the partnership can move forward. Leaders serve as the catalyst for action, whether they are spearheading the partnership publicly or working quietly behind the scenes. Effective leadership is critical to strong, state-level partnerships.

- **Policy entrepreneurs.** Recognizing that the arts and arts education are seldom central concerns of state government, leaders within partnerships act as “policy entrepreneurs,” who seek to sell policy ideas and, in so doing, promote dynamic policy change. Policy entrepreneurs promote their ideas by identifying problems, shaping the terms of policy debates, networking in policy circles and building coalitions. Those who define policy problems carefully and make good use of networks of contacts will be better placed to make compelling arguments in support of their policy issues. To ensure the success of an arts education partnership, partners need to identify leaders—policy entrepreneurs—who are best positioned to help make and implement policy.
- **Leaders at all levels.** Partnerships are generally comprised of leaders from various organizational levels. Membership in a partnership provides individual leaders with valuable opportunities to exercise their leadership skills in a larger domain. But leadership must be cultivated in and out of the state partnership, and up and down within each agency. Partnerships may begin initially at the level of program managers, but eventually need to

engage chief executives and governing boards if the partnership initiatives are to expand and thrive. In addition, local leaders who may be influential to some aspect of the state partnership can be invited to participate in meetings and serve on advisory boards. For state-level initiatives, leaders need to maintain communication with front-line staff and local-level arts educators, as well as bring local ideas and best practices into state-level discussions.

- **Cultivating and sustaining leaders.** Effective leaders need to be supported through ongoing professional development, which allows them to put theories into practice and enhances their productivity, both in the partnership setting and professionally. The partners should encourage each other to learn from reflective practice. Partner staff and boards with formal authority need cultivation and education as well, so they are well informed and able to speak on behalf of the partnership. New people entering the partnership will view their work more favorably if they feel an alignment with their professional needs and priorities. Organizations inevitably experience personnel turnover, but this disruption can be mitigated if partnering organizations hire people with the potential to exercise leadership in the partnership and include partnership work in the job descriptions for new personnel. Developing ways to identify and mentor new leaders and provide regular recognition and visibility for long-term leaders is necessary to sustaining an effective partnership culture and creating a nurturing environment from which leaders can emerge.
- **Building trust and respect.** Effective leaders build trust with each other, their constituents and the public by listening, building consensus and sharing leadership. Within a partnership, shared commitment prior to action is critical to trust. “Power” is often unequal within partnerships because of partners’ different organizational cultures and bureaucracies. Navigating these complexities and accomplishing shared decision-making is the mark of a mature partnership.

Advice from the States on “Leadership”

- Trust is a function of credibility; a coalition of effective leaders can help build trust.
- Look at different levels of leadership from policymakers to program directors. Consider both volunteer and professional leaders. All are important.
- Plan recognition and rewards for leadership of existing leaders. Recognize often and widely.

COMMUNICATION

“Make deliberate time to communicate. Make time. Communicating is time consuming; not taking time to do so is a barrier to partnership.”

Communication is the means by which members of the partnership keep stakeholders informed and learn from one another as they work together on behalf of the common vision.

Timely and efficient communication is the thread that ties successful partnerships together. Good communication facilitates the flow of information among the partners, between the partnership and its constituents and with policymakers. Effective partners learn how, when and why to communicate. The Arts Education Partnership's strategic communications plan, developed collaboratively with the partners, is a useful model. Its three objectives are: develop and deliver core messages among media and other target audiences; support and report on arts education research; and broaden outreach and seek opportunities with nontraditional, special and grassroots audiences.

Partners help translate between the arts and education "languages" and work toward building a shared language. Though personnel limitations may affect timeliness and consistency, partnerships should consider developing a system that builds in flexibility and regularity, and allows for both formal and informal communication with each other and with outside stakeholders. As partnerships mature, participants learn each other's preferred means of communicating, and establish ground rules that work for each member. As in all aspects of a partnership, communication systems should be evaluated from time to time to ensure effectiveness.

- **Good communications methods:** Face-to-face communication is required to build trust, rapport and partnership norms. Good communication requires feedback loops so that partners can share news, information and plans, and receive responses from each other and from constituents. Electronic communications facilitate continued, efficient dialogue. Communication should accommodate differing organizational styles and cultures, competing schedules and variable jargon.
- **Message is a product:** Communication is the system that gets the message out to the field. The clearer and more carefully crafted the message, the more likely it is to resonate and yield the desired results. The partnership itself requires consistent, articulate and simple messages. Maintaining consistency and clarity of the message help serve both policy and advocacy goals.

Advice from the States on "Communication"

- Communication needs to be timely and efficient.
- Relationships are very important. Good personal communication is required among the players.
- Know how to listen. Know partners' different values, and respect different views and inputs.
- Know your specific audience and target the message to that audience.

PRODUCT

Products should derive from agreed upon strategies designed to achieve the partnership's goals and objectives through programs, events, services, policies, funding programs, documents and promotions. A good communications plan ensures that products are perceived as tangible evidence of the partnership accomplishing its purpose.

State participants shared a wide-range of partnership products with each other and the national partners during the November 2001 meeting. From professional development institutes and arts education advocacy to an assessment handbook, the products represented a sampling of how states have responded to the needs of their constituents.

- **Product planning and evaluation.** State partners emphasized that for products to be useful they must be derived from real needs in the arts education field and among the partners. Product development must be the result of planning and be consistent with a larger vision and current partner priorities. Some state leaders convene local representatives or use institutes to help develop new products, which are later field-tested. Evaluation must be built in from the beginning with measurable outcomes. Needs assessment and evaluation of success of the product help develop a feedback loop that keeps the product relevant.
- **Product accessibility and adaptability.** Products should be designed keeping in mind the diversity of intended users. The best products are highly adaptable, enabling constituents to participate in the ownership of the service, opportunity or message, and allowing them the flexibility to modify it to meet their own needs. Dissemination strategies must be part of planning so that the products reach their intended beneficiaries.
- **Visibility for the partnership.** Tangible products offer partners the opportunity to showcase their roles and relationship to the public, in addition to providing a service. Good products raise the visibility of arts education issues and of the partnership. It is important to credit the individual partner agencies as well as the collective partnership to ensure that policymakers within each agency recognize the benefit of continued participation in partnership activities.

Advice from the States on “Product”

- Product has to be connected to and advance the vision.
- From the start, partners should determine how shared ownership will be credited.
- Products must be professional, look good and be appropriate for distribution in a variety of ways: print, CD-ROM, video, online, etc.... Determine the target markets for specific products and plan accordingly.
- It is important to acknowledge *all* of the partners and their contributions during the process. Once the product is created, those contributions and roles should continue to be credited.
- Field test products, and include ongoing evaluation and revision of the product in your planning.

Environmental Dynamics

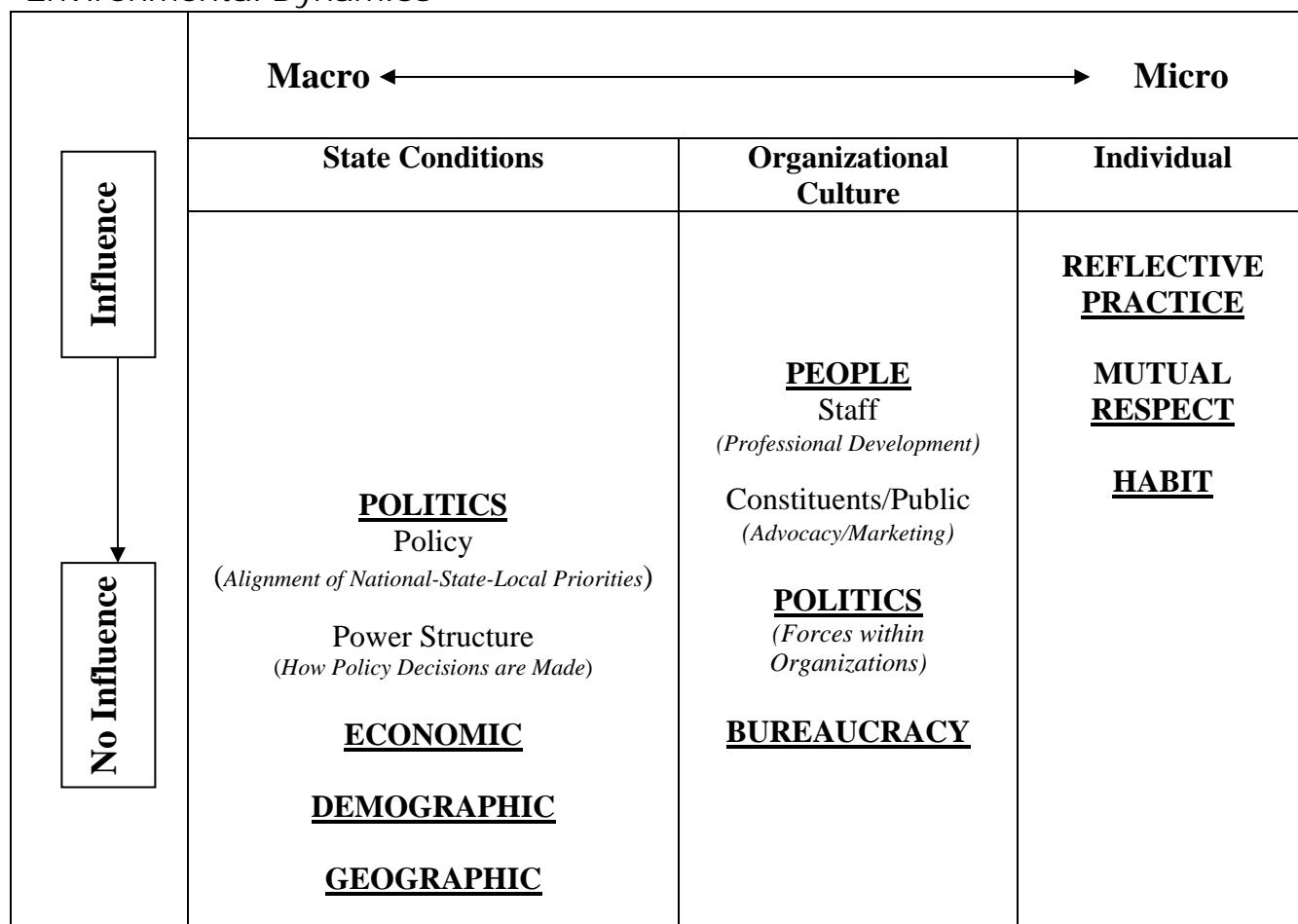
Environmental Dynamics: The Concept

“We start with a notion that there are successful factors in partnerships. We are cognizant that there are aspects of the environment that run through all the factors. We’re interested in your observations of the impact of politics, organizational cultures and structures, the fact that our field is under-resourced, undercapitalized. We expect these overarching factors to influence how the other factors apply...” (Katz, 2001).

The concept of environmental dynamics as significant influences in state arts education partnerships arose from the experiences of the state leaders. Though all states are affected to some extent by national environmental trends, each state also experiences certain conditions—political, economic, demographic and geographic—that are unique to their own location and situation, and affect their work. These environmental conditions impact a state’s ability to sustain a partnership.

Some environmental conditions are more readily influenced than others. Some, such as geographic and demographic conditions, are beyond the partnership’s control. The environmental dynamics at play in a particular state may be viewed on a continuum, as in the following diagram.

Environmental Dynamics



Both the macro and micro levels on the environmental conditions continuum affect partnerships in differing degrees. For instance, at the furthest end of the chart at the macro level of “state conditions,” there is obviously little a partnership or an individual can do to alter the demographic or geographic landscape of their state. However, understanding the role of the geographic landscape in the quality and availability of arts education in a state may help partners address this environmental condition through targeted services or programming such as expanding artist residencies or touring.

At the other end of the spectrum, at the micro level, individuals will have the greatest influence over how they personally choose to engage the world. Embracing reflective practices, respecting partners and turning discreet personal behaviors into daily habits are well within an individual’s control, and will affect the productivity of a partnership.

By developing a better understanding of the various contexts within which a partnership is functioning, partners become better prepared to prioritize their activities and identify which factors within the framework need to be improved in order to strengthen the partnership.

Individuals

Individuals who engage in **reflective practice** consistently evaluate their performance, and seek to identify and develop interpersonal and technical skills that allow them to improve. They actively seek advice and input from outside sources and ask questions like, “How can I improve my work?” and “What information can help me be more effective?” This personal philosophy is active in state leaders who read current and relevant research, or regularly spend time in the field observing how services reach constituents and listen to constituent reactions. Reflective practitioners are familiar with the function of critical feedback, engage in it and have good problem-solving skills when things are not working. Through a combination of self-awareness and solid skills, reflective practitioners can help partnerships work through the difficulty of building relationships.

When reflective practice is combined with **respect**, it can be a powerful force within a partnership. State leaders in November 2001 emphasized the importance of nurturing a basic level of politeness and courtesy arising from respect for each other. Partnerships falter when there is a lack of trust or a perceived lack of respect for individual strengths or expertise. State arts education partnerships benefit from individuals who actively listen, value what others have to say and engage in respectful people-to-people behaviors, especially if the partners are working through disagreements.

Individuals within a partnership contribute to its success and growth by incorporating reflective practice and respect into their personal behavior. When these attributes become **habits** of mind and practice for each individual in the partnership, *leadership* and *communication* factors become assets. More than one state leader described scenarios where personality conflicts and the over-personalization of a problem seriously challenged and undermined the work of a partnership. If every individual is committed to cultivating a climate of trust, their skills and values create an environment where disagreements remain focused on ideas, not people, and problem-solving is rightfully centered on the issues at hand.

Tips from State Leaders: *Know how to listen; know different values; and respect different views and inputs. Learn to say you’re sorry.*

Organizational Culture

Each organization possesses a unique “culture,” which is influenced by its mission or mandate, the composition of its leadership and governing structures, its policies and operating procedures and the personalities of the individuals it employs. State leaders spoke frequently of the sometimes profound differences in the individual cultures of the state departments of education, the state arts agencies and the state alliances for arts education, and the challenges of working through the resulting conflicts.

Within an organization, **people** are intrinsic to the success and failure of any partnership. People-centered organizations and partnerships find effective ways to put their human resources first, actively supporting the growth, health and competency of its staff and, in some cases, volunteers. People-centered organizational cultures support staff professional development as a

regular course of doing business. Ideally, the professional development plans for staff connect logically to the work of the partnership and are well within the sphere of influence of leaders of an agency (such as commissioners, executive directors or human resource managers). Strong partnerships can provide staff with a simultaneous opportunity to do agency work and learn from colleagues outside of their agency, whose expertise and professional skills complement their own. For instance, a state arts agency or alliance leader who has not come from the field of education will benefit from the experience of a department of education coordinator with 30 years of direct classroom experience. Good partnership relationships, supported by receptive organizational cultures, allow individuals the time and space needed to learn from each other.

Currently, the national partners are encouraging states to devote more attention to the role of professional development, with an eye toward increasing the effectiveness of state services and retaining and improving staff capacity. For states that align with this message, there are national opportunities to continue to support both professional development and partnership. (See national partners' Web site addresses listed on page 41.)

Part of the strength of partnerships lies in bringing together diverse constituencies in support of an issue. State leaders in November 2001 recognized that with regard to arts education, multiple messages and messengers are needed for advocacy efforts to be effective. A message that resonates with business leaders may not be as compelling to parents. Different partners can speak to or lend credibility in delivering a particular message about arts education. State leaders recognized that while it is important to identify the right messenger, it is equally important to deliver the right message to the policymaker most capable of exerting influence. If the message is reinforced by independent phone calls, constituent letters or publicity, the advocacy effort is more likely to be successful. Successful partnerships call upon their constituent bases when the time or circumstances demand it.

Tips from State Leaders:

- *Make professional development a priority and plan for it.*
- *Make friends before you need them. Having a communication and advocacy system in place ahead of time is crucial in being able to address challenges.*

Politics within and external to organizations affect the individual priorities and climate in which the state organizations operate. Within state agencies with multiple departments and administrative layers, there may be political forces that do not value the arts or consider arts education as a priority. But the internal cultivation and communication among staff and council or board members can help create a political climate within the organization that supports both arts education and the partnership working to promote it. At times, it may be more effective for a partner organization to step in to try to influence agency leaders, rather than the individuals in the agency itself.

Tips from State Leaders: *For the state department of education, the arts are one subject among many. An outside partner can influence a department in ways that arts specialists or other staff can't.*

Bureaucracy exists for good reasons, such as stability and continuity. Consequently, it is a function of bureaucracy to present reasonable resistance to internal and external influence. Two dictionary³ definitions seem to characterize best what state leaders meant when describing the 'bureaucracy' in their respective agencies: one, a "government characterized by specialization of functions, adherence to fixed rules, and a hierarchy of authority"; and two, "a system of administration marked by officialism, red tape, and proliferation."

The existing status quo in the culture of an organization, especially a large system subject to various forms and degrees of public accountability, can make working in inter-agency partnerships difficult. State leaders with formal authority such as state arts agency directors or state department of education leaders can, to some extent, influence the bureaucracy to facilitate or even impede partnership work. For example, if it takes three signatures to approve the in-state travel for a state leader to attend a partnership meeting in the southern part of a state, this could prevent the ongoing participation of one state partner in the formal activities of the partnership.

But bureaucracy is a hurdle that can be overcome with understanding and collaboration among the partners. Awareness of and support from upper-level state agency leaders should be encouraged, since they can often help eliminate bureaucratic obstacles. It is useful to keep in mind that bureaucrats can be mission-driven, creative and service-oriented individuals.

State Conditions

The "State Conditions" column in the environmental dynamics diagram represents the level of macro analysis over which partnerships have the least amount of influence. These conditions include the people, politics and environment (economic, demographic and geographic) that uniquely define the character of a state.

Politics define how decisions are made at the state level. How the political power structure operates—whether policymaking is driven by the governor or the legislature; how influential the education lobby is; which political party is in control and how this may affect policy, priorities and governance—are all factors within the political profile of any given state. Politics can be volatile; and though contingency plans can be made for changes in elected leadership, there is no way to predict with certainty how potential political scandals, controversies or public backlash to existing policies may affect partnership work.

More than any other state environmental dynamic, the politics at play in a state can force partnerships to shift their work and priorities if the conditions merit their immediate attention. Numerous partnerships have experienced the upheavals caused by legislative funding being rescinded or by the appointment of a new state official who is antagonistic to the work and priorities of the partnership. Increasingly, state partnerships are experiencing the impact of the

³ Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary online: <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary>, June 18, 2002, "bureaucracy".

growing trend toward term limits for elected officials. With more fledgling elected officials entering the policy arena, partnerships spend an increasing amount of time and resources educating new leaders. Champions of arts education and reliable legislative votes can be lost through election attrition, term limits or change of leadership, which can derail policy efforts.

Barring a political crisis, state arts education partnerships typically spend a substantial amount of their time working to influence national-state-local priorities. If these policies work in concert, new possibilities and opportunities become available to the partnership and its constituents. Difficult to accomplish alone, this alignment occurs when national, state and local partners agree on goals, communicate and develop a common policy language. One successful example is the states' efforts over the years to align the development of state education standards with national policy, including the National Standards in the Arts. Were it not for the strong federal education policy that placed the arts squarely in the National Goals for Education, many state partnerships would have found it difficult to encourage their own state's education reform plan to include the arts.

Within the state condition spectrum, we find the factors that are most resistant to the influences a partnership may be able to exert. Certainly, the **economics** of a state will affect the *resources* available to state leaders to sustain the work of their partnership. However, in November 2001, state leaders noted that even the state with the smallest amount of financial resources available had a strong, multifaceted partnership that supported its goals and activities. While economics affects partnerships, it does not need to be a reason for inaction.

Similarly, the **demographics** of a state are a challenge for state arts education partnerships, but they are important to consider when developing products and services, and in envisioning the overall goals of the partnership. When the state demographic makeup changes, it is often in response to larger economic and political forces. The state arts education partnership may play a role here, to the extent that the arts and education communities become involved in shaping those forces through cultural tourism, school improvement and economic development efforts.

The state arts education partnerships have least control over **geographic** conditions in their state. Whether partners live in small or large states, near farmlands, in desert regions or by the ocean, these are elements that cannot be controlled beyond working to improve infrastructures that support and provide access to basic services. Geographic conditions may affect the *communication* factor of a partnership, creating a financial or logistical hardship for partners to meet regularly. Recognizing this as a factor helps partners to plan and adapt their work to the terrain. For instance, state partnerships in Hawaii, Nebraska and Vermont harness technology to mobilize arts education communities separated by distance. Other states build partnership activities around other statewide gatherings to alleviate the time and financial costs of traveling to multiple events.

A state's geography has long contributed to the historical and cultural development of that particular region. Partners will invariably spend time identifying ways to expand upon geographic assets or to overcome its challenges. But some state arts education partnerships have been able to capitalize on the unique arts of their region—from cowboy poetry to pueblo pottery to local architecture—to celebrate the diversity of people who call the state home.

A successful partnership draws upon its members' resources to broaden representation—politically, demographically and geographically—so that the partnership reflects the diversity of the state. State conditions, then, become an asset.

Chapter

3

Interweaving Research and Practice

Using These Lessons

State leaders participating in the November 2001 gathering recommended sharing the process of this investigation with others in the arts education field. For that reason, we have outlined the planning steps we engaged in as national partners as a way to help states strengthen their own partnerships at the state and local levels. We encourage you to use and adapt the factor frameworks to your state arts education partnerships—test them, interchange them and use one or none. As demonstrated through our investigation, each state deals with a variety of environmental dynamics that makes each potential partnership unique. This chapter presents one strategy that may help an existing state partnership grow.

Step 1: Meet and Reflect - Revisit the Vision

When the partners agree on the vision and mission that they share, working together follows naturally.

An important component of the state arts education partnership leaders' work at the November 2001 meeting was their being encouraged to take the time needed to reflect on their purpose and work together. Face-to-face time spent reflecting on the mission and accomplishments of the partnership allows for a deeper level of understanding to emerge, especially for those new to the circle.

During this reflective meeting, important and essential questions were revisited: Why did you come together in the first place? What parts of arts education or arts learning did you all agree were important? What were those common values that made it important to even consider working together? Take the time to reconnect with the *vision* that brought you together in the first place.

Revisiting the past and purpose of a partnership could happen as an item on an agenda in an existing meeting. Or, a special time could be set aside for moving through many steps on this list, in a retreat or formative couple of days for a new partnership. The personal time can help develop some of the bonds that create that culture of respect or develop new habits that facilitate people working together, and reaffirm the important work of your *leadership*.

Step 2: Reflect on Partnership Outcomes

Reflection should be directed toward agreement on the roles each partner is best suited to play in order to achieve the shared vision, goals, objectives and strategies.

Take stock of your partnership—for better or worse. Look historically at what has worked and what hasn't. Articulate both triumphs, as well as trials. States participating in this investigation found that by taking time to identify both strengths and challenges, they could take a realistic look at how to improve their partnership, and reminded themselves of the value of working together.

Suggested Activity: *Take Stock of the Partnership*

Identify:

- **Top 3 Strengths:** Brainstorm these questions: What have been some of the best aspects of working together? Why do you really belong together, working toward some greater good?
- **Top 3 Challenges:** Gently ask these questions: What are the areas in your partnership giving you difficulty? What has been particularly challenging about working together? Where do you fail or have trouble making progress?
- **Up to 10 Tangible Results:** Examine what you've accomplished. From summer institutes, graduation requirements and assessment handbooks to advocacy days, state arts education partnerships accomplish a great deal. If you are just starting out, list a few goals for your accomplishments; give them a timeline. You could even break them into smaller objectives that will be achievable and measurable. For example, you may first want to develop a committee that includes important community members, teachers, university deans, arts directors, artists and politicians. You convene the committee to create a vision, rationale and language for an arts graduation requirement. The next step may be to begin to build grassroots advocacy support through your partners. You develop a timeline identifying key opportunities to change policy. Each partner takes the lead at different appropriate moments. Each move is guided by a common vision. Each step taken by each partner leads to an accomplishment toward the larger goal.

Step 3: Examine Partner Roles

We always need to walk back to our institutions and explain how we are advancing the mission of our agency through the partnership work; otherwise, we would not get the resources to continue.

Once you have taken the “temperature” of the partnership and reflected on that, it is then time to reconvene—to move deeper into an examination of the roles each partner plays. Partners may work together to achieve a shared purpose, employing specific areas of expertise in arts learning, advocacy, broadening a constituent base, or disseminating best practices and research. Or, these activities may be divided up with one partner responsible for a specific activity based on each partner’s organizational culture with its own opportunities and limitations.

To reflect on how various roles are playing out in your partnership, consider asking these questions:

- What are our separate and combined areas of strength and weakness?
- How can we structure our various tasks to work together more effectively?
- Why do we have duplication in services?
- Are there specific reasons, such as politics or the mission of individual organizations, which require the duplication to continue?
- If so, can we assist each other to reduce competition and ease delivery of the service for all organizations?

Suggested Activity: Profiles

- Each partner organization drafts an **organizational profile** (about two paragraphs) of its programs and services related to arts education and arts learning. Many organizations will have this on hand already. Share these profiles with each other; there may be opportunities waiting to be discovered.
- Together, develop a **partnership profile** that succinctly describes the joint work of the partner organizations on behalf of arts learning. In some cases, such as Mississippi’s Whole Schools Institute or South Carolina’s Arts are Basic to Curriculum programs, the partnership profile actually describes one or more joint programs.

Reflecting on your partnership achievements, programs and products in this manner will also provide valuable information to collectively promote your services in arts education. Within your state, you could use a brochure, like Hawaii, or a Web site to share the basic services the partners and the partnership offer constituents.

Step 4: Develop Priorities for a New Level of Partnership

What often appears to us as seizing opportunity is possible because an infrastructure (such as a partnership) has been put in place not in time of crisis; it is there when needed, to be able to seize the opportunity.

Having engaged in revisiting the partnership vision, identifying partnership strengths and challenges, and examining various partner roles, you are now ready to assess new or next priorities for partnership action and to engage in a discussion of the resources you may need to be successful. In addition, it may be time to take stock of the environmental conditions currently coming to bear on the partnership activities—the opportunities as well as the threats. This is especially important when developing priorities. Often a change in political climate, a shift in leadership or other landscape-altering event clears the way for an action that was previously thought to be unachievable. For example, a change in gubernatorial leadership after an election may pave the way for a state appropriation for arts education. Or, the state partners may find that the federal emphasis on testing in reading and math has challenged the continued existence of the statewide arts assessment. Perhaps this new emphasis has created a domino effect on the arts curriculum, programs and teachers because what doesn't get *tested*, doesn't get *taught*. Priorities may shift with significant environmental changes.

As you analyze and synthesize the information you gather from both an external and internal review of the partnership, you may find the following approaches to be helpful:

- ✓ **Explore the Possibilities:** Find out what other state arts education partnerships have accomplished. Contact any that have experience that could be helpful to you. Ask what they have learned from failure, as well as success, to help you avoid potential pitfalls they may have encountered. Ask how they have managed environmental changes and challenges. See the “Helpful Web sites” sidebar for online partnership resources.
- ✓ **Goal Setting:** Reflect on your common vision for arts education and arts learning. Are your current goals and activities connected to the vision? If you have a strategic plan, how relevant is it to the current environment? What, as partners, do you want to achieve together, and for what purpose; how will this help the people in your state?
- ✓ **Use the Factor Framework to Examine the Partnership** (chapter two): Which factors have become assets? Which are challenging? Which have not entered into your work at all? Based in part on your environment, respective missions and current priorities, which two factors do you want to work together to cultivate as assets?
- ✓ **Use the Environmental Framework to Analyze Your Current Environment** (chapter two): What situations affect your ability to work successfully together today? What can we influence; what is more difficult to change? Pick two top areas that you as partners will work to influence, to help create a positive environment for working together. Develop a timeline and plans to monitor your progress.

- ✓ **Examine National Models:** Find out about the structure, governance, convening habits and intervention strategies of national arts education partnerships. For example, some states have found the Arts Education Partnership (<http://aep-arts.org>) format for bringing together education, arts and funding entities from the local, state and national levels to be helpful. The Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative (http://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa-news/al_partners.htm), the outgrowth of a national partnership, used research, convening and resources to develop tools for the field, including this publication. The KCAAEN's Self-Assessment Kit provides a model for organization evaluation, making references throughout the document to the important partnership relationship among state alliances, state arts agencies and state departments of education. The KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit is available for state alliances to use to evaluate their internal operations and governance, partnership efforts, and arts education programs and services. Most state arts agency and state departments of education have representation (often ex-officio) on state alliance boards and many alliances have used the KCAAEN Self-Assessment Kit in collaboration with their state agency partners since its release in 1999.
- ✓ **Expand Your Circle of Friends:** As your priorities evolve, the partnership work may call for more time and effort than a state partner could do individually or even together. In many state partnerships, the partners sometimes join in on an as-needed basis. Additional partners may be brought in to achieve a specific objective, lend a specific area of expertise or to address a special constituency. Colleges and universities, professional arts teacher associations, parent groups, associations of administrators or school boards, arts or cultural group networks, local arts agencies, VSA arts, Young Audience chapters, politicians, local leaders, businesses, leading arts and culture institutions, and local schools and school districts have all played a role in various state arts education partnerships.

Your discussion of priorities will be an ongoing one if your partnership is long-term. Emerging partnerships will find that taking on less in the short term allows them to establish working relationships. Taking smaller, achievable first steps help build a foundation for success, which will become critical to sustaining partnerships through the inevitable obstacles that the partners will encounter. As we have learned from this investigation, there is no single partnership model that works for all states. Instead, we found an array of ways to work together and a set of common factors—but manifesting differently in successful partnerships. Ultimately, these partnerships are all bound together by mutual experiences, a common purpose and a vision for arts education at the state level.

Helpful Web sites

NASAA: Visit the Partnership area of NASAA's Arts & Learning site http://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa-news/al_partners.htm for links to work in other states. Various states address important issues in the field, including the following:

- Using **federal education funding** to develop services that help the field understand arts assessment (Ohio)
- Promoting an **arts-centered school reform approach** (South Carolina, Mississippi, Connecticut, Nebraska, North Carolina)
- Including **community based arts learning** in education policy priorities through a Governor's Task Force on Arts Literacy (Rhode Island)
- Developing a **network with the arts teacher professional associations and higher education** to support policy changes (Florida)
- Implementing a **state arts graduation requirement** (Florida, Mississippi, Ohio)
- Developing a **summer institute for artists and teachers** linked to a strategic arts education plan (Hawaii)
- Increasing the **quality and quantity of research and data about arts education** in the state (Florida, Ohio)
- Cultivating a **network of local partnerships** (New York)

Arts Education Partnership: The Arts Education Partnership's publications on partnerships can be accessed at <http://www.aep-arts.org/Publications&Resources.html>, including [*Learning Partnerships: Improving Learning in Schools with Arts Partners in the Community*](#) (Dreeszen, Aprill and Deasy) and [*Strengthening State-Level Arts Education Partnerships*](#) (The Arts Education Partnership).

Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network: The KCAAEN's Web site includes contact information and a profile of the work of each state alliance, including major programs and partnerships, and highlights of their impact. Major policy initiatives in each state are included in the profiles. State alliances that have been honored by the KCAAEN for special achievements are noted under the "Special Recognition" area of the Web site. The KCAAEN Special Initiatives area contains reports and documents that can be downloaded, including *A Community Audit for Arts Education* and its companion, *Findings Report*. The KCAAEN Web site is part of the Education and Outreach section of the Kennedy Center's Web site, and can be accessed at <http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/kcaeen>.

Step 5: Convene Local Partnerships

To get the attention of the education community, the arts have to be a united constituency. Otherwise there isn't enough momentum to get the attention of school boards and superintendents.

When states gathered to explore arts education partnerships, a resounding idea emerged: “We can take this model home and try it with our local constituents!” Much as national partners listened and learned at the November 2001 gathering, so can state leaders learn from a convening of local arts education partnerships. While national and state policy certainly help leverage and provide incentives for local school reform, the greatest impact on teachers and students occurs district by district, school by school. Thus, local arts education partnerships can wield an exceptional amount of influence in the quality of programs and progress of arts education at the local level.

Local partnerships might vary in form, ranging from a long-term school-artist partnership to a formalized relationship between school districts and an arts education organization. Depending on their experience level and the current opportunities these partnerships may have to meet. A gathering that encourages them to explore partnership strengths, challenges and accomplishments could similarly deepen those partnerships in the field.

The agenda used to organize the one-day gathering where we gathered lessons from the state partnerships in attendance, is published here as Appendix 1. To help leaders understand how the agenda events were orchestrated, we have also included the “script,” or detailed agenda describing activities related to specific agenda items.

The agenda and meeting format may be adapted for a half day, using only parts of it, or a whole weekend, giving more time for reflection and small group work. Convening local partners and designing a productive day for them takes work. But if done well, the benefits to both the state and local partners are enormous. What this type of event can do for local arts education partnerships is to help them recognize and honor the fact that though this is not easy work, it is extremely important.

State partners benefit from exploring and developing an understanding of the similarities and differences between the partnerships at the state and local level. We encourage you to invite your local partners to add to this growing body of knowledge, as together you enter into this important learning community.

Chapter

4

In Conclusion...A Beginning

Moving Forward

The Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative gathered a cadre of national partners, along with state leaders from across the country, to engage in the best thinking about what factors are involved in building and sustaining strong state-level partnership in arts education. Their wisdom and experiences built the foundation for this framework report. And the results of their hard work form the basis of this publication and the accompanying Web site.

But this is just the beginning. We invite you to join the continuing investigation by testing the framework and applying it to partnerships in your state. If the framework evolves, it will be through your input and participation in this network.

We hope that you will discuss this approach to state partnerships with your partners and partners-to-be. Share what you learn on your listserves, in your conferences with colleagues and with us. As the locus of educational policy and power at the state level, the role your state partnership can play in strengthening arts education becomes increasingly important.

If you are just now considering taking on the work of partnership, remember:

- ✓ **You are not alone.** There are others working on partnerships in other states who can provide helpful advice. There are potential partners within your state who can help make it easier to reach some of your goals for arts education.
- ✓ **There is no one way to do it.** Every state has different circumstances, from economic climate to the personalities of the individuals currently in leadership positions. There may be multiple ways to reach your goals for arts education. Explore what your colleagues are doing, and develop partnerships particularly suited for your strengths and situation.

- ✓ **Partnerships take work.** While partnership may be in fashion right now, with both public and private funders touting its benefits, it is not easy work. And partnership is not always the right solution to every problem. Use these frameworks to help create a healthy culture for the partnership work you do take on. Leave room. It will take longer than you might think to accomplish your goals. State partnership work takes more communication, planning, preparation and cultivation than organizations plan from the outset.
- ✓ **Partnerships can accomplish more in the long run.** The realm of statewide arts education reform—from acquiring supportive state policy for arts education to delivering appropriate services and programs—is too large for a single organization or agency to engage in alone. Take heart from the state partnerships that have influenced graduation requirements or rescued state and local staff positions from near elimination. Especially with changing financial predictions, now is a good time to find ways to work together and increase your own organization’s efficiency and effectiveness. With more than enough work for everyone to do, pick your priorities carefully and move forward together.

For those of you who find this document just a beginning, we encourage you to download the full proceedings of the November 3, 2001 meeting from the NASAA Arts and Learning Web site. You can access every bit of advice from the participating states, from strengthening a particular factor to avoiding pitfalls. The more detailed document may also help you pinpoint whom to call as you move forward.

Good luck in your work! We commend you on your commitment to arts education and wish you well in the development of your state partnership to help create new opportunities for young people to learn through the arts.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Agenda – INVESTIGATION OF STRONG STATE PARTNERSHIPS

November 3, 2001

The Melrose Hotel, 2430 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20037

202-955-6400, 202-775-8489 (fax)

Meeting Room: Potomac 3; Lunch: Potomac 1.

8:00 - Breakfast

8:30 - Opening. Jonathan Katz: Welcome and Thank Yous.

The Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative – Jonathan Katz, NASAA

Context/history of this inquiry into state arts education leadership – Dick Deasy and Sara Goldhawk, Arts Education Partnership

How national organizations/agencies are working to modeling partnership – Doug Herbert, National Endowment for the Arts

Why lessons learned today can be significant to the field – Derek Gordon and Kathi Levin, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

8:50 - Orientation

Learning outcomes for the day, Jonathan Katz

Context of the framework/and factors, Jonathan Katz

Explanation of key factors arising from preparatory work, Dawn M. Ellis

10:00 - Exploration of factors – Chuck Needlman, Facilitator

Explores question: “What strategies would you suggest to develop each factor into an asset for state-level arts education partnerships?” with written responses to the factors around the room.

Refer to factor worksheet for greater detail on factors.

FACTORS: Vision, Communication, Product, Roles, Resources and Leadership

@ 10:30 – *Break into Groups.* Self-select by interest.

Suggested Questions:

Select a notetaker, if needed, and a state reporter.

Read and discuss written comments.

Probe more deeply in the specific state-level aspects, especially around the SAA-SDOE-SAAE relationships.

Each group should add any additional thoughts, and summarize the information on the FACTOR.

If there is additional time, consider:

The Factor Framework
Environmental Dynamics

@ 11:30 – *Report Out* – state reporters summarize factor discussion: 5 - 10 minutes each report.

12:30 - Lunch

1:30 - Segue to “Big Picture questions”

Two groups to both discuss “Addressing challenges” questions.

Group I: Jonathan (facilitate) and Sara Goldhawk (scribe)

Group II: Derek (facilitate) and Johanna Misey Boyer (scribe)

Questions:

What are some commonly perceived threats?

Describe a watershed crisis moment and how your partnership is addressing it.

What are some internal threats to relationships?

How do you adapt to new people/organizations becoming involved in old partnerships?

How do you develop safe spaces (cocoon) for the type of sharing that can't happen in a public forum?

2:40 - Regroup, recap

3:00 - BREAK, feel free to go outside

3:30 - Disseminating Lessons Learned, Chuck Needlman

Discussion: “**What are the best ways to share these partnership lessons with your colleagues?**” using a technique to observe or participate in a small discussion.

4:45 - Full Group Discussion on Reflection, Chuck Needlman

What do you wish you had known about partnership the first time you entered into state partnership work?

What have you learned in reflection?

Commonalities among the tangible results

5:45 - Wrap up, Jonathan Katz

Leadership initiative: possible next steps, and evaluation, Dawn M. Ellis

Thank yous, Jonathan Katz

6:15 - Fill out evaluation and any last “Parking Lot” comments

6:30 - End of Meeting

Investigation part of the Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative

with the

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

National Endowment for the Arts

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts/

Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network

Arts Education Partnership

*with special funding assistance from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and
the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts/Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts
Education Network*

Appendix 2

Detailed Agenda – Investigation of Strong State Partnerships

Play-by-Play Agenda: November 3, 2001

Meeting Location:

The Melrose Hotel
2430 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20037
202-955-6400, 202-775-8489 FAX
Meeting Room: Potomac 3
Lunch: Potomac 1

(Large print agenda also available and was selected by some participants.)

NOTE: The following is a working agenda for the planners and partners hosting this meeting, and includes suggested talking points. While the agenda is set, the planning committee agreed that the facilitators of the meeting should monitor the group dynamics and make adaptations in time as needed, provided the primary goals of discussing advice on factors, addressing challenges, dissemination strategies and reflection are covered. **If you have a laptop, please bring it.** Having more on hand will help volunteer recorders use this technology if they so prefer.

7:00 – Facilitators, notetakers, consultants and partners meet at Potomac 3, to review and prepare.

SET-UP: 6 easels with flipcharts for 6 factors; few pages of post-it-note flip chart for facilitator; another few for the “Parking Lot;” more than enough markers for each attendee; sticky pads around the room, with writing utensils for Parking Lot and Factor comments. Nametags out on resource table. Extra materials and agendas on resource table.

8:00 – Breakfast. Invite attendees to fill in state arts education budget and staff figures on wall chart. Leave any materials brought to share on the resource table.

8:30 – Opening – Jonathan Katz, serves as MC:

Welcome and thank you to states—Hawaii, Florida, South Carolina, Mississippi, Ohio—and to national partners:

NEA: Doug Herbert, Nancy Daugherty

KC/KCAAEN: Derek Gordon, Kathi Levin

AEP: Dick Deasy, Sara Goldhawk

NASAA: (Jonathan), Johanna Missey Boyer

And to **consultants:** Dawn Ellis, Craig Dreeszen, Chuck Needlman

To **funders,** Kennedy Center and Packard Foundation

Brief words from partner agencies:

- The Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative – Jonathan Katz (5 min.)
- Context/history of this inquiry into state arts education leadership – Dick Deasy (5 min.) (Doug can cover if Dick is not here.)
- How national organizations/agencies are working to model partnership – Doug Herbert (5 min.)
- Why lessons learned today can be significant to the field – Derek Gordon (5 min.)

8:50 – Orientation

- The background for today's work – Jonathan Katz
- **Learning outcomes for the day:**
 - ✓ Learning about **state** arts education partnerships especially among the DOE-SAA-AAE. Ask them to be specific and candid today; helpful information to share with others as they approach this work.
 - ✓ States are **validated**; identified as doing good work.
 - ✓ We all have a new **framework** that helps us look at the work of state partnership more objectively, especially during difficult or changing situations.
 - ✓ State **attendees as teacher**: We are recording their lessons learned from experience in this work, so national organization can offer better interventions and technical assistance.
 - ✓ While the leadership initiative plan calls for sharing lessons learned on the NASAA Web site, we'd like to hear from them about how best to do this, and/or other ways that this information could/should be **disseminated** in the long term to help other practitioners.
 - ✓ To keep people engaged, ensure that everyone has a chance to contribute, and use different learning styles. Today's format will be varied, using a variety of group working styles. Don't be afraid to roll up your sleeves and participate wholeheartedly—there are no right or wrong answers, and 'I don't know' is an option as long as you explore that further today.
- **Context of the framework/and factors**
 - All of their work can be affected or informed by:
 - ✓ **Environmental dynamics:**
 - Politics
 - Organizational culture and structure
 - Working in the under-resourced arts education and service fields
 - ✓ Learning from other's experiences/research/existing models
 - ✓ Environment at other levels (local and national)
 - ✓ A partnership can experience a factor as a challenge and asset simultaneously

- ✓ The framework being developed could be useful in helping states clarify current situations and develop partnership strategies
- **Explanation of key factors** arising from preparatory work – Dawn M. Ellis
 - This is a framework in development. We’re testing the idea with them – share thoughts along the way, both in the discussion and in the “parking lot,” if the agenda is moving in a different direction than your thought or question.
 - Take up to 3 questions/comments on the factor framework so far.

10:00 – Exploration of factors – Chuck Needlman (introduced by Jonathan Katz)

Posted around the meeting room are the FACTORS on flip charts.

On another flip chart note the question: **What strategies would you suggest to develop FACTOR X into a partnership asset for state-level arts education partnerships?**

All present, including state attendees and national partners roam through room, responding to the question for each factor based on their experiences. People should note their own and their organization’s initials on any comments posted. Participants may talk with each other and read what others have said, but should stay focused on responding to the FACTORS.

@(10:30) – *Break into Groups*. After about 20 minutes or as long as it takes to exhaust the participants’ ideas, facilitator asks: Please go to the FACTOR that you would like to work with. Groups do not have to be equal, however, they should have no less than 3 and no more than 6 state attendees; all FACTORS must be covered. Ask assigned facilitators/notetakers to raise their hands to be acknowledged.

FACTOR	TEAM	NOTETAKER
Vision	Jonathan	State volunteer
Communication	Kathi	Cassandra
Product	Derek	State volunteer
Roles	Sara and Nancy D (collaborate)	
Resources	Doug	State volunteer
Leadership	Johanna	State volunteer

Chuck, Craig and Dawn – float, assess overall meeting, assist as needed.

Facilitator Notes/Suggested Questions:

- Select a notetaker, if needed, and a state reporter.
- Read and discuss written comments.
- Probe more deeply in the specific state-level aspects, especially around the SAA-DOE-AAE relationships: What contributes to making it a challenge or an asset? What advice do you have about making it an asset? How did you learn this? (Specific examples from their state work.)

If the discussions get too basic or directed to local-level collaboration, you may ask:

“What have you learned that is unique to state-level partnering?” or
“What are the particular opportunities and challenges of working with an alliance for arts education, a state department of education or a state arts agency?”

If someone makes a general observation, i.e., “clarification of roles is important,” you might ask,

“Can you give a quick example to illustrate how this helps state-level partnerships?” or
“What are your specific concerns about roles in state-level collaborations?”

- Each group should add any additional thoughts and summarize the information on the FACTOR.
- If there is additional time, consider:
 - Inquiring about their opinion of the framework and how this factor fits into the framework. Is this an accurate summary of the important factors that can be assets and/or challenges to their work of state partnership?
 - Probing into the environmental dynamics that affect their partnership work including:
 - Politics
 - Organizational culture and structure
 - Working in the under-resourced arts education and service fields

@(11:30) – *Report Out* – state reporters summarize factor discussion—around 5 - 10 minutes each report. If time, a few questions, comments or thoughts.

12:30 – BUFFET LUNCH (Johanna announces)

1:30 – Quick focus activity for all present. – Chuck

1:40 – (Segue) From the factors to the big picture – Jonathan Katz describes, Chuck organizes the groups.

Break into two large groups, by counting off 1 – 2 – 1 – 2. 1s on one side of room and 2s on the other. **State attendees are the focus of the discussion. National partners and others should count off and join groups, primarily as listeners.**

Group I: Jonathan (facilitate) and Sara (scribe)

Group II: Derek (facilitate) and Johanna (scribe)

Addressing challenges:

- What are some commonly perceived threats?
- Describe a watershed crisis moment and how your partnership is addressing it.
- What are some internal threats to relationships?
- How do you adapt to new people/organizations becoming involved in old partnerships?
- How do you develop safe spaces (the cocoon) for the type of sharing that can't happen in a public forum?

2:40 – Come together. Facilitators summarize some common approaches to addressing challenges in partnership.

3:00 – BREAK: Time to walk around block. (Jonathan announces.) (Need snacks available.)

3:30 – Return, and quick movement stretch for everyone with Dawn

3:40 – Disseminating Lessons Learned (using the “Fish Bowl Technique”) – Chuck

Chairs are arranged in a large circle with a group of 5 chairs in the middle. Group is asked: **“What are the best ways to share these partnership lessons with your colleagues?”**

Related points:

... so that it gets used.

... so that it is most accessible.

... in a way that can be most helpful to other state partnerships.

...practical applications of this knowledge.

... think about not only information dissemination, but also professional development—how you learn, when you learn and what you learn.

... existing forums that could be enhanced by this knowledge.

A facilitator invites 4 attendees to join her/him in the middle to discuss the presenting topic (could include Dawn, at Chuck’s discretion). All others sitting in the outer circle listen. Those who have something to say may join the group in the middle by getting up and tapping the shoulder of one of the inner circle participants who has already spoken. Persons “tapped out” of the discussion will rejoin the outer circle and listen, remaining there unless another point arises they would like to share. Attendees who are sitting in the inner circle should stay there and listen, even after they have spoken until they are “tapped out” by another attendee. **Anyone who has something to say may participate—let the state attendees go first. National partners and others may join in as the discussion evolves.**

4:45 – Full Group Discussion on Reflection. Chuck facilitates.

Reminder: focusing on YOUR state-level partnerships, among the state Departments of Education, Alliances for Arts Education and arts councils, considering the following:

- ✓ What do you wish you had known about partnership the first time you entered into state partnership work?
- ✓ What have you learned in reflection?
- ✓ ... on your challenges
- ✓ ... on your successes and achievements?
- ✓ If appropriate, invite Dawn to note some of the similarities among the tangible results lists and ask “What do you make of these commonalities?”

Commonalities include:

- High school graduation requirement
- Policy—funding—advocacy as three common roles for one of each of the partners
- Involvement of other partners, especially higher education
- We’re not perfect (and we don’t always work together perfectly)
- The role of professional development, including summer institutes

- ✓ How valuable could the sort of reflection you did in preparation for this meeting, and here today, be for others?

Other comments, questions and reflections. **National partners should listen until Chuck asks for questions or comments from the floor.** If time, can also address any Parking Lot thoughts/issues, just to have them heard, if not fully addressed today. Don’t need to have answers for everything.

5:45 – Wrap up – Jonathan brings us back together

Possible next steps related to the initiative – Dawn

- Listen to their advice on dissemination, some immediate, some inform longer range planning.
- Begin to develop possible interventions for next year and seek external funding
- Invite them again to offer information in the Parking Lot area before we leave, so that it is documented and we can reflect on it
- Share invitations for revision, e-mailing stats on profiles, to edit profile and e-mail back to me.
- Note Craig Dreeszen who is evaluating the day and the project – any questions or comments or forms for him.

More thank yous and praise for good work – Jonathan Katz

6:15 – Break to fill out evaluation, and adding notes to the Parking Lot area.

6:30 – End of Meeting

APPENDIX 3 – NASAA Arts & Learning Web site

NASAA's Arts & Learning Resources for State Leaders Web site (The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies), is one of many resources available to you in your state partnership development.

Homepage

http://nasaa-arts.org/nasaanews/index_anl.htm



[NEWS AND INFORMATION](#)

[RESEARCH](#)

[RESOURCES](#)

[RELATED ORGANIZATIONS](#)

[PARTNERSHIPS](#)



Through a grant from [The David and Lucile Packard Foundation](#), the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and its national and state partners in arts education are working to improve the environment for arts education leadership, with a focus on

- arts education managers at state arts councils,
- state arts education teams and partnerships, and

- communication/information sharing.

This section of the NASAA Web site serves as a locus of information and resources for the project, entitled the **Arts Education Leadership Network Initiative**. Contributions, recommendations of professional development resources and questions may be directed to [Dawn M. Ellis](#), NASAA's consultant for the initiative.

National Partners:

[National Assembly of State Arts Agencies](#)

[National Endowment for the Arts](#)

[Arts Education Partnership](#)

[Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network/](#)

[John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts](#)

[Council of Chief State School Officers](#)

(excerpted...) Photo by Jessica Katz.

Middle: "If You Try Hard Enough," by Stephanie Strauss, courtesy of the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Bottom: Photo by Greg Helgeson, courtesy of the Minnesota State Arts Board.

Appendix 4 – Contact Information

Contact Information

List of Participants – November 3, 2001

Investigation of Strong State Partnerships in Arts Education

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